

Language

CONTENTS

Dari	227
Pashto	231

Dari and Pashto are the official languages of Afghanistan, but Dari is the one most commonly used as a lingua franca (linking or market language). Like Farsi, Dari and Pashto are written using a modified alphabet of the cursive Arabic script (see p228).

Tajik, Uzbek, Turkmen, Kyrgyz and Wakhi are all spoken by minorities in northern Afghanistan. All these languages (along with Pashto) are covered in Lonely Planet's *Central Asia Phrasebook*.

DARI

Dari is so similar to Farsi (the language of Iran) that even Afghanis will often refer to it as Farsi. The principal difference between the two is that Farsi contains more loan words from Arabic and Turkish.

Dari is an Indo-Iranian language and a member of the Indo-European language family. While it is written in Arabic script, and runs from right to left, it isn't related to Arabic at all. For a more comprehensive guide to the language, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's *Farsi Phrasebook*.

PRONUNCIATION & TRANSLITERATION

Transliterating Dari from its non-Roman script into the Roman alphabet is a tricky affair. In this language guide the system used is designed to be as simple as possible for spoken communication, even at the expense of absolute accuracy.

In general, the last syllable of a multi-syllable word is stressed.

Vowels

Like Arabic, Dari script has only one letter (*alef*) dedicated solely to cover vowel sounds, and many vowels that would otherwise be represented in written English are

simply left out. It is some consolation that the English vowel sounds **i** (as in 'marine') and **u** (as in 'rule') are represented in the script by the letters *ye* (ﻱ) and *ve* (ﻭ) respectively (which are also used to represent the consonant sounds **y** and **v/w** respectively). Some vowel sounds do have long variants, but pronouncing them short won't overly affect meaning. We transliterate Dari and Pashto using the following five English vowel equivalents.

a	as in 'father'
e	as in 'bed'
i	as in 'marine'
o	as in 'mole'
u	as in 'rule'

Consonants

Dari consonants sounds are shown in the alphabet table on p228. There are many consonants represented in the script with only subtle sound differences; the transliterations in this book reduce these variants to their closest English equivalent. The following are the only really tricky sounds:

gh	a guttural sound like a heavy French 'r' pronounced at the back of the mouth
'	a very weak glottal stop, like the sound made between the words 'uh-oh' or the 'tt' in Cockney 'bottle'

ACCOMMODATION

Do you have any rooms available? *otagh khali darin?*

I'd like a ... room. *yak otagh e ... mikhamam*
single *yak nafara*
shared *chand nafara*

How much is it for ...? *baraye ... cheghadr misha?*
one night *yak shab*
a week *yak hafta*
two people *du nafar*

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

The all-purpose Dari greeting is *salam aleykom*, which does duty for 'good morning', 'good afternoon' and 'good evening'.

THE DARI/FARSI ALPHABET

Final	Medial	Initial	Alone	Transliteration	Pronunciation
ا			ا	a	short, as in 'act', long, as in 'father'
بـ	بـ	بـ	بـ	b	as in 'bet'
پـ	پـ	پـ	پـ	p	as in 'pet'
تـ	تـ	تـ	تـ	t	as in 'ten'
ثـ	ثـ	ثـ	ثـ	s	as in 'set'
جـ	جـ	جـ	جـ	j	as in 'jet'
چـ	چـ	چـ	چـ	ch	as in 'chat'
حـ	حـ	حـ	حـ	h	as in 'hot'
خـ	خـ	خـ	خـ	kh	as the 'ch' in Scottish <i>loch</i>
دـ			دـ	d	as in 'dot'
ذـ			ذـ	z	as in 'zoo'
رـ			رـ	r	as in 'run'
زـ			زـ	z	as z above
ژـ			ژـ	zh	as the 's' in 'measure'
سـ	سـ	سـ	سـ	s	as s above
شـ	شـ	شـ	شـ	sh	as in 'shed'
صـ	صـ	صـ	صـ	s	as s above
ضـ	ضـ	ضـ	ضـ	z	as z above
طـ	طـ	طـ	طـ	t	as t above
ظـ	ظـ	ظـ	ظـ	z	as z above
عـ	عـ	عـ	عـ	'	a glottal stop (see p227)
غـ	غـ	غـ	غـ	gh	a rough, guttural sound (see p227)
فـ	فـ	فـ	فـ	f	as in 'fact'
قـ	قـ	قـ	قـ	gh	as gh above
کـ	کـ	کـ	کـ	k	as in 'kit'
گـ	گـ	گـ	گـ	g	as in 'get'
لـ	لـ	لـ	لـ	l	as in 'let'
مـ	مـ	مـ	مـ	m	as in 'met'
نـ	نـ	نـ	نـ	n	as in 'net'
وـ			وـ	v	as in 'very' (in Dari only)
				w	as in 'wary'
				u	as in 'rule'
هـ	هـ	هـ	هـ	h	as h above
یـ	یـ	یـ	یـ	y	as in 'yacht'
				i	as in 'marine'

Welcome.

Greetings.

Hello.

Good morning.

Good day. (noon)

Good evening.

Goodbye.

How are you?

khosh amadin

salam aleykom

salam

sob bekhayr

rux bekhayr

shab bekhayr

khoda hafez

haletan chetor hast?

Fine – and you?

Yes.

No.

Please.

Thank you.

Thank you very much.

You're welcome.

Excuse me/I'm sorry.

khubam – shoma chetorin?

bala

na

lotfan

tashakor

besyar tashakkor

kharesh mikonam

bebakhshid

I like ...	<i>man ... dust daram</i>
I don't like ...	<i>man ... dust nadaram</i>
What's your name?	<i>nametan chist?</i>
My name is ...	<i>namam. . . hast</i>
Where are you from?	<i>az koja hastin?</i>
I'm from ...	<i>man az ... hastam</i>
It is God's will.	<i>mashallah</i>

mother	<i>madar</i>
father	<i>pedar</i>
sister	<i>khwahar</i>
brother	<i>baradar</i>
daughter	<i>dokhtar</i>
son	<i>bacha</i>
aunt	<i>ameh (maternal)/ khaleh (paternal)</i>
uncle	<i>kaka (maternal)/ mama (paternal)</i>
wife	<i>zan</i>
husband	<i>shuy</i>

DIRECTIONS

Where is the ...?	<i>... koja st?</i>
Can you show me (on the map)?	<i>mitanin (dar naghsh) be man neshan bedin?</i>
Is it far from here?	<i>un az inja dur hast?</i>
Go straight ahead.	<i>mostaghim berin</i>
To the left.	<i>taraf e chap</i>
To the right.	<i>taraf e rast</i>
here	<i>inja</i>
there	<i>unja</i>
behind	<i>poshte sar</i>
in front of	<i>pishe ru</i>
far (from)	<i>dur az</i>
near (to)	<i>nazdik be</i>
opposite	<i>moghabele</i>

HEALTH

Where is the ...?	<i>... koja st?</i>
chemist	<i>davakhana</i>
doctor	<i>daktar</i>
hospital	<i>shafakhana</i>
I have ...	<i>... daram</i>
asthma	<i>asma</i>
diabetes	<i>maraze shakar</i>
I'm allergic to ...	<i>be ... hassasiyat daram</i>
antibiotics	<i>antibiyutik</i>
aspirin	<i>asperin</i>
peanuts	<i>mumpali</i>
penicillin	<i>penisilin</i>
I'm sick.	<i>mariz am</i>
antiseptic	<i>zedd e ufuni konanda</i>

EMERGENCIES – DARI

Help!	<i>komak!</i>
Stop!	<i>tavaghof!</i>
Go away!	<i>gom sho!</i>
Call ...!	<i>... khabar konin!</i>
a doctor	<i>yak daktar</i>
an ambulance	<i>yak ambulans</i>
the police	<i>polis</i>

I wish to contact my embassy/consulate.
*mikhaham ba sefarat/konsulgari khod am tamas
begiram*

Where is the toilet?
tashnab koja st?

Shame on you!
*khejalat bekaash! (said by a woman to a man
bothering her)*

aspirin	<i>asperin</i>
diarrhoea	<i>es-hal</i>
medicine	<i>dava</i>
sunblock	<i>kerem e zedd e aftab</i>

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

Do you speak English?	<i>shoma ingilisi midanin?</i>
Does anyone here speak English?	<i>inja kasi ingilisi midanad?</i>
I (don't) understand.	<i>(na) mifahman</i>
How do you say ... in Dari?	<i>... ra dar dari chi migin?</i>
Please write it down.	<i>lotfan un ra benevisin</i>

NUMBERS

0	<i>sifir</i>	۰
1	<i>yak</i>	۱
2	<i>du</i>	۲
3	<i>se</i>	۳
4	<i>chahar</i>	۴
5	<i>panj</i>	۵
6	<i>shash</i>	۶
7	<i>haft</i>	۷
8	<i>hasht</i>	۸
9	<i>noh</i>	۹
10	<i>dah</i>	۱۰
11	<i>yazdah</i>	۱۱
12	<i>duwazdah</i>	۱۲
13	<i>sizdah</i>	۱۳
14	<i>chahardah</i>	۱۴
15	<i>panzdah</i>	۱۵
16	<i>shanzdah</i>	۱۶

17	havdah	۱۷
18	hajdah	۱۸
19	nuzdah	۱۹
20	bist	۲۰
21	bist o yak	۲۱
22	bist o du	۲۲
30	si	۳۰
40	chehel	۴۰
50	panjah	۵۰
60	shast	۶۰
70	haftad	۷۰
80	hashtad	۸۰
90	navad	۹۰
100	sad	۱۰۰
167	sad o shast o haft	۱۶۷
200	do sad	۲۰۰
1000	hazar	۱۰۰۰

SHOPPING & SERVICES

Where is the ...?	... koja st?
bank	bank
city centre	markaz e shahr
consulate	konsulgari
embassy	safarat
hotel	hotal
lodging house	mosaferkhana
mosque	masjed
market	bazar
office	daftar
police	polis
post office	posta khana
public toilet	tashnab e umumi
tourist office	edare ye turizem

I'd like to buy ...	mikhaham ... bekharan
How much is it?	Kimatesh chand hast?
I don't like it.	az un khosh am nemiyad
May I look at it?	mitanamun ra seyr konam?
I'm just looking.	faghat seyr mikonam
I think it's too expensive.	fekr mikonam un ziyad
I'll take it.	geran hast
	un ra mikharam

Do you accept credit cards?

kredit kard ghabul mikonin?

Do you accept travellers cheques?

shoma cheke safari ghabul mikonin?

TIME & DATES

What time is it?	sa'at chand hast?
today	emruz
tomorrow	farda
yesterday	diruz
tonight	emshab
morning, am	sob

afternoon, pm	ba'd az zohr
day	ruz
month	mah
year	sal

Monday	dushanba
Tuesday	se shanba
Wednesday	chahar shanba
Thursday	panj shanba
Friday	jom'a
Saturday	shanba
Sunday	yakshanba

TRANSPORT

What time does the ... leave/arrive?	... che sa'ati harekat mikone/mirese?
bus	sarvis
plane	tayara

What time is the ... bus?	sarvis e ... key miyad?
first	awal
last	akher
next	ba'di

I'd like a mikhaham
one-way ticket	tikete yak tarafa
return ticket	tikete du tarafa

I'd like to hire a ...	mikhaham ... keraye konam
car	motar
4WD	forwldravv

Where is the bus stop?	istgah e sarvis koja st?
Where's a service station?	petrol estayshen e ba'di kojast?
Please fill it up.	lotfan tanki ra por konin
I'd like ... litres.	... litr petrol mikhaham
Is this the road to ...?	in sarak be ... mira?

diesel	dizal
petrol/gasoline	petrol

SAFE TRAVEL

Is it safe/dangerous?	un mason hast?
Are there landmines?	mayn hast?
aid-worker	komakgar
bomb	bam
gun	tofang
landmine	mayn
refugee	panahanda
rocket	rakat
security (forces)	amniyat
soldier	asgar
war/fighting	jang

PASHTO

Pashto is the speech of the Pashtuns across southern and eastern Afghanistan, and Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. Though there are some regional differences in pronunciation between the Swati and Afghan dialects (eg the north-ers call themselves Pakhtun, the south-ers Pashtun), this is still the lingua franca from the Indus to Kabul. For a more detailed coverage of Pashto, get a copy of Lonely Planet's *Central Asia Phrasebook*.

PRONUNCIATION

The Pashto language is written in an Arabic script. Most Pashto sounds are also found in the English language, while a few additional ones must be learned. Intonation is important and this can be learned quickly by listening to Pashtuns speak.

Pronunciation of Pashto vowels and consonants is more or less the same as it is for Dari (see p227).

ACCOMMODATION

hotel/inn	<i>otel/sarai</i>
guesthouse	<i>mehman khana</i>
youth hostel	<i>da zawanano hastel</i>

Do you have any rooms available?	<i>kota sheta?</i>
How much is it per night?	<i>te yawy shepy tso paisy di?</i>

I'd like a ...	<i>ze ghuarum yawa ...</i>
single room	<i>singel kota</i>
twin room	<i>dua ghebargy koty</i>
double bed	<i>dua bestery</i>

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Greetings.	<i>assalam u alaikum</i> (lit: peace be upon you)
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And upon you peace.	<i>wa alaikum u ssalam</i>
Goodbye.	<i>de kuday pe aman</i>
Good night.	<i>shpa dey pe khair</i>
Thank you.	<i>sta na shukria</i>
Excuse/Pardon me.	<i>bakhena ghuarum</i>
Yes.	<i>hoo</i>
No.	<i>na</i>
Sorry.	<i>wobakha</i>
How are you?	<i>ta tsanga yei?</i>
I'm fine, and you?.	<i>ze khe yem aw ta?</i>
What's your name?	<i>sta noom tse day?</i>

EMERGENCIES – PASHTO

Help!	<i>komak!</i>
Stop.	<i>wadrega</i>
Go away.	<i>lar sha</i>
Call the police.	<i>polis rawoghua</i>
Call a doctor.	<i>dakter rawoghua</i>
Could you help me please?	<i>de khudai pe khater zema sa komak waka?</i>
I wish to contact my embassy.	<i>mehrabani waka zema safarat khana khabar ka</i>
Where's the toilet?	<i>tashnab cherta day?</i>

What country do you come from?	<i>ta la kuom hiwad na raghelay yi?</i>
I come from ...	<i>za la ... na raghelay yem</i>

Do you speak English?	<i>ta pe angrezai pohegy?</i>
Do you understand?	<i>poh shwey?</i>
I (don't) understand.	<i>ze (ne) pohigam</i>
I don't speak Pashto.	<i>ze pe pashto ne pohigam</i>

DIRECTIONS

Can you tell me where ... is?	<i>cherta dai ...?</i>
Do you have a local map?	<i>da die alaki naksha darsara sheta?</i>
Go straight ahead.	<i>negh lar sha</i>
Turn right/left.	<i>khai/chap taraf ta wagarza</i>
Is it far?	<i>da lirey dai?</i>
Can I walk there?	<i>pe pakho telalai shem?</i>
left/right	<i>chap/khai</i>
far away	<i>deyr lirey</i>
near (to ...)	<i>(... ta) negdey</i>
north/south	<i>shimal/janub</i>
east/west	<i>shark/gharb</i>

HEALTH

I have ...	<i>ze ...</i>
asthma	<i>sa landai</i>
diabetes	<i>diabetes/(da shakar maraz)</i>
diarrhoea	<i>diarrhoea/eshal</i>

I'm sick.	<i>ze naroozh yem</i>
I am allergic to antibiotics.	<i>ze de antibiotiks sara hasasiat larem</i>
antiseptic	<i>antiseptic</i>
aspirin	<i>aspirin</i>
clinic	<i>klinik</i>
doctor	<i>dokter</i>
hospital	<i>raghtoon/haspatal</i>
painkillers	<i>aram rawronke golai</i>
pharmacy	<i>dawakhana</i>
sanitary napkins	<i>zanana dusmalona</i>

NUMBERS

See p228 for the script used with numbers.

0	sefer
1	yau
2	dua
3	drei
4	tsalare
5	penza
6	shpag
7	owa
8	ata
9	naha
10	las
11	yauolas
20	shal
21	yau wisht
30	dirsh
39	naha dirsh
40	tsalwekht
50	panzos
60	shpeta
70	awia
80	atia
90	nawi
100	sal
101	yau sal yau
200	dua sawa
1000	zer
1001	yau zer yau

SHOPPING & SERVICES

Where's the nearest ...? kum ... negdy dai?

bazaar	bazar
grocery store	khuraka feroshi
market	market
pharmacy	dawa khana

Where can I buy a ...? ... cherta akhestelay shem?

How much does this cost? da pe tso dai?

It's very expensive. da deir gran dai
Can you reduce the price? baia kamawalay shey?

credit card	credit card
money exchange	paisy badlawal
travellers cheque	safari chek

TIME & DATE

When?	kala?
What time is it?	tso baji dhi?
morning	sahar
afternoon	da gharmy na wrosta
evening	makham
today	nan wras
tonight	nan shpa
tomorrow	saba

Monday	pir/doshanba
Tuesday	naha/mangle
Wednesday	sharow/budh
Thursday	ziarat/jumarat
Friday	juma
Saturday	hafta/shanba
Sunday	atarwar/yakshanba

TRANSPORT

I'd like to go to ...	ze ghuram che ... ta lar shem
What time does the next bus leave?	bal ba pe tso bajo bus rarasigi?
Where is the bus terminal?	cherta dai bus ada?
I want to get off at ...	ze ghuram pe ... ke kooz shem
How much?	karaya tso da?

return ticket	wapasi tiket
ticket office	tiketono dafter
car	motor
fill up	dakawal
map	naksha
motorbike	motor saikel
petrol	petrol

SAFE TRAVEL

Is it safe/dangerous?	khatar day?
Are there landmines?	dalta nazhde kum mayn shta? (mayn as in English 'mine')
aid-worker	mrastanduy
bomb	bam
gun	topak
refugee	kadwal/mahajir
rocket	raket
soldier	askar
war/fighting	jang

Glossary

ab – water

ACBAR – Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief

Afghani – currency of Afghanistan

Aimaq – Dari-speaking nomads of central and western Afghanistan

Allah – God

amir – chieftan or nobleman

amu – river

ANA – Afghan National Army

ANP – Afghan National Police

ANSO – Afghan NGO Security Office

asalaam aleikum – Muslim greeting, literally ‘peace be with you’; the usual response is *wa aleikum salaam* (and peace be with you too).

Ashura – Muslim holiday particularly celebrated by Shiites, marking the death of Hussein at Karbala in AD 680.

atan – national dance of Afghanistan

ATO – Afghan Tourist Organisation

azan – Muslim call to prayer

Bactria – ancient name for northern Afghanistan, centred on Balkh

badgir – traditional tower built on roofs in semidesert regions, to funnel in breezes

bagh – garden

baksheesh – donation, tip or bribe

bala hissar – ‘high fortress’, citadel and traditional seat of royal power

bandar – port

beg – landlord, gentleman

bukhari – room heater

burqa – enveloping veil worn by many Afghan women

buzkashi – traditional polo-like game of northern Afghanistan, played with a headless goat carcass

caravanserai – basic accommodation for travelling traders

chaderi – see *burqa*

chai – tea; can be either green (*chai sabz*) or black (*chai siyah*)

chaikhana – teahouse

chapan – long-sleeved silk coat worn in northern Afghanistan

charahi – crossroads or roundabout

charas – marijuana

chowk – crossroads or town square

chowkidar – caretaker, night watchman

commandan – leader of local militia

daff – flat-framed drum, often played to accompany Sufi rituals

daftar – office

Dari – national language of Afghanistan, also referred to as Farsi

darya – river

dasht – desert

Deobandism – Indian anticolonialist school of Muslim teaching, a large influence on Taliban ideology

dotar – long-necked lute

Durand Line – border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, imposed in 1893 by Sir Mortimer Durand

falang – large minibus (from the term ‘flying coach’)

Farsiwan – Dari-speaking Shiites from northwest Afghanistan

feringhee – foreigner, see also *khareji*

gilim – woven carpet

ghazal – sung verses of poetry

Ghaznavid – Turkic-Afghan empire ruled from Ghazni, 10th to 12th centuries AD

Ghorid – 12th century Afghan empire, founded by Alaud-din ‘the World Burner’

gombad – dome or domed monument

Graeco-Bactrian – Hellenistic kingdoms and culture in north Afghanistan following conquest by Alexander the Great

Great Game – geopolitical ‘Cold War’ of territorial expansion between imperial Russia and Britain in 19th century Central Asia

Hadith – collected acts and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed

haj – the pilgrimage to Mecca, to be made by devout Muslims at least once during their lifetime

haji – honorific title denoting someone who has performed the haj

hammam – bathhouse

Hazara – Shiite ethnic group of Mongol descent from central Afghanistan

hazrat – honorific title meaning ‘holy’

Hejira – the flight of the Prophet Mohammed and his followers from Mecca to Medina in AD 622 (taken as the start of the Islamic calendar)

Hezb-e Islami – Party of Islam; largely Pashtun fundamentalist party, founded by Islamist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

Hezb-e Wahdat – Party of Islamic Unity; Hazara-dominated Shiite political party

hijab – Muslim woman’s veil or headscarf (literally ‘modest dress’)

IDP – Internally Displaced Person
IED – Improvised Explosive Device
iftar – breaking of the *Ramazan* fast at sunset
imam – Muslim religious leader
insha'Allah – 'If God wills it', universal Muslim saying
ISAF – International Security Assistance Force, led by NATO
Ismaili – a branch of Shiite Islam
iwān – open-ended barrel-vaulted hall used in mosque architecture

jad – road, street
jamaat khana – Ismaili community hall, their closest equivalent to a mosque
Jamiat-e Islami – Society of Islam Party; moderate Tajik political party and leading player in the Northern Alliance, with the late Ahmad Shah Massoud as its figurehead
jang – war
jihad – holy struggle or holy war
Jihad, the – popular name given to the Afghan anti-Soviet war
jirga – council of community elders and leaders
Jumbesh-e Melli – National Islamic Movement; almost exclusively Uzbek political party, dominated by General Abdul Rashid Dostum

kafir – Islamic term for a nonbeliever
Kalimeh – Muslim declaration of faith ('There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His prophet'; shahadah in Arabic)
karakol – breed of Afghan sheep; also the pelt from newborn lambs used in Afghan hats
karez – subterranean irrigation canal
khan – Muslim title, typically referring to landed elite
khanka – opium (Pashto); also called *tareyak* (Dari)
khareji – foreigner
khel – Pashtun clan
Khoda – God (Dari)
koh – mountain
kolah – turban cap
Koran – see *Quran*
kot (kotal) – mountain pass
kowk – partridge kept for bird fighting
Kuchi – nomad, usually Pashtun
Kushan – Buddhist empire that ruled Afghanistan from 1st century AD
Kyrgyz – Nomadic tribe of the Wakhan Corridor

landay – Pashtun folk poetry, composed in couplets
lakh – 100,000
loya jirga – grand tribal council
lungi – turban

madrassa – Islamic college
malang – wandering holy man, usually a *Sufi*

malik – Pashtun tribal chief
masjid – mosque
maulana – Islamic cleric
mazar – tomb
mehman – guest
mehmankhana – guesthouse, hotel
melmastia – hospitality, a key pillar of *Pashtunwali*
Meshrano Jirga – House of the Elders; the upper house of the Afghan parliament, acting in a primarily advisory role
mir – honorific title given to some Afghan leaders
muezzin – one who calls Muslims to prayer, traditionally from the minaret of a mosque
Mughal – Muslim India empire founded in Afghanistan in 16th century
mujaheddin – Muslim fighter engaged in *jihad*
mullah – Islamic cleric
Muslim – adherent of the Islamic faith

namaz – Muslim prayer
nan – bread
nan – honour, a key pillar of *Pashtunwali*
Nauroz – Afghan new year with pre-Islamic roots, celebrated on the spring equinox (March 21)
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
Northern Alliance – coalition of anti-Taliban Afghan forces, dominated by Panjshiri Tajiks; also called the *United Front*

Oxus – historic name of Amu Darya River

pakul – flat pancake-shaped hat
Pashto – second language of Afghanistan, spoken by *Pashtuns*
Pashtun – dominant ethnic group of Afghanistan, divided into two main branches, the Durrani and Ghilzai
Pashtunistan – Pashtun tribal region spanning the Afghan–Pakistan border
Pashtunwali – Pashtun tribal code
pattu – the woollen blanket carried by many Afghan men
PCO – Public Call Office; for making telephone calls
PDPA – People's Democratic Part of Afghanistan; former ruling communist party, divided into opposing *Khalq* and *Parcham* factions
pir – holy man; given to the head of a Sufi order
pirhan tonban – traditional male clothes, of knee-length shirt and baggy trousers
PRT – Provincial Reconstruction Team
pulao – Afghan meal of rice with meat or vegetables

qala – fort
qawwali – Islamic devotional singing
qazi – Judge overseeing Islamic law
Qizilbash – Turkic Shiite ethnic group living in Kabul
Quran – the holy book of Islam; also spelt *Koran*

Ramazan – Islamic holy month of sunrise-to-sunset fasting; referred to as Ramadan outside Afghanistan
rebab – short-necked lute; the Afghan national instrument

Safavid – Persian dynasty ruling west and southern Afghanistan in 16th to 18th centuries

samovar – tea/hot water urn found in *chaikhana*s

sayyid – descendent of the Prophet Mohammed

sefarat – embassy or consulate

shah – king

shahid – martyr

shahr – town or city

shalwar kameez – see *pirhan tonban*

sharia – Islamic law, derived primarily from the Quran and Hadith

Shiite – minority Muslim sect

shura – Muslim consultative council

Sufi – follower of Islamic mysticism

Sufism – Islamic mysticism

Sunni – Muslim sect; dominant worldwide and in Afghanistan

suzani – traditional Uzbek embroidery of wool or silk on cotton cloth

Tajik – second-largest ethnic group in Afghanistan

takht – throne; also raised platform for seating in a *chaikhana*

talib – religious student

Taliban – Pashtun Islamist political movement that ruled Afghanistan from the mid-1990s to 2001

tangi – gorge

tareyak – see *khanka*

tariqah – Sufi order or brotherhood

tashnab – toilet

teppe – hill

Thuraya – brand of satellite phone

Timurid – Central Asian empire of the 14th to 15th centuries, ruling Afghanistan from Samarkand and Herat
tofan – gun

Tribal Areas – primarily Pashtun autonomous areas of North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan in Pakistan that border Afghanistan

Turkmen – minority ethnic group concentrated in the northwest of Afghanistan

Ulema – collection of Muslim scholars and clergy; traditional arbiters of sharia

UNAMA – UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan; umbrella body for all UN agencies in Afghanistan

UNHAS – UN Humanitarian Air Service

United Front – see *Northern Alliance*

UXO – Unexploded Ordnance

Uzbek – minority ethnic group concentrated in the northwest of Afghanistan

Wahabbi – conservative and literalist Muslim orthodoxy from Saudi Arabia

Wakhi – ethnic group living in the Wakhan Corridor

wat – street

watan – country, homeland

White Huns – nomadic group that settled in Afghanistan around AD 400 and carved the Bamiyan Buddha statues

Wolesi Jirga – House of the People; the lower house of the Afghan parliament and primary law-makers

zakat – charitable donation; the third pillar of Islam

ziarat – shrine

zitr – *Sufi* devotional ritual, often involving music and recitation of the names of Allah